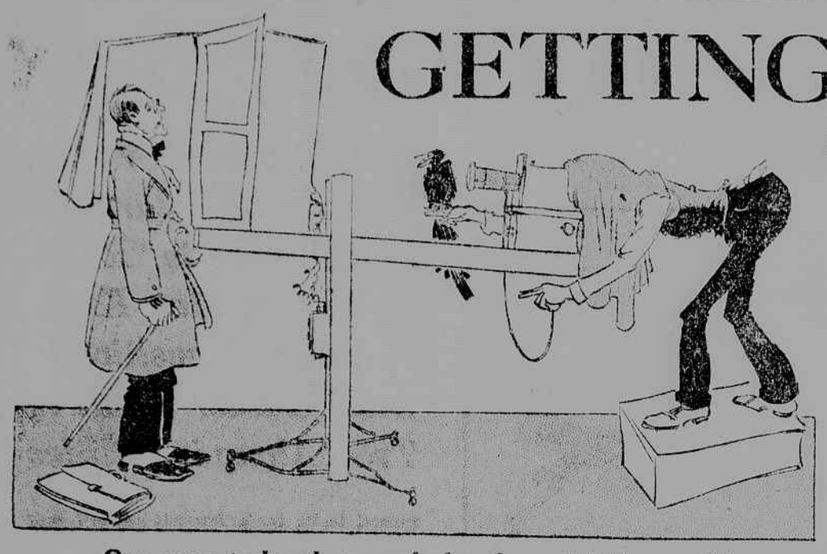
GETTING PASSPORTS FOR THE 5:15

By FAIRFAX DOWNEY

Illustrations by JEFFERSON MACHAMER



One came to be photographed and one left "mugged"

THOUSANDS of commuters who live in the country for the joys of nature have been looking attentively at the birdie in Grand Central Station lately. The figurative birdie has peeped, the commuters have "looked pleasant"—or as pleasant as commuters can—the camera has snapped and after due developments commutation ticket books have been provided with unhandsome photographic illustrations. Besides these frontispieces, which may be accompanied by the autograph of the author, these popular little books of moderate price now are bound in leather and carry a simple little foreword by the New York Central Railroad. The present edition is dedicated to the month of October.

The measure raising the commuter to the dignity of a European traveler with a passport or the pilot of a motor car was determined upon by the railroad to verify certain suspicions, long lurking, that some of their diurnal passengers every now and then would travel under a dual personality or perhaps one of their alter egos; that the non-transferable tickets were become little courtesies to be exchanged between friends or commodities to be bootlegged around stations at cut rates under the regular tickets.

As proof that its suspicions had not been entirely unfounded the railroad offered figures compiled from records of branches on which the photograph feature had been in effect for a month, with the result that the sale of commutation tickets had fallen off 25 per cent. Not that many devotees of the commuting life had weakened and given up, in the opinion of the railroad, which was prone to think that the lost sheep were black ones and purchasers for the purpose of profit. In one town the record of 119 commutation tickets for one month had sunk to fifty-seven the following, under photographic conditions. The difference at sixty rides to the ticket figures up to a loss of $8,631.02 for that station in one month. According to present data, about $640,000 a year was slipping away from the railroad through the guile of passengers who were not what they seemed, but were wolves in commuters' clothing.

Hence came the insistence that a commuter and his ticket be not so easily parted; that the little book be more than inscribed with a name and punched for male and female. The art of appearing incognito was doomed. For while it was no trick at all to travel under an assumed name, very few have any talent for traveling under an assumed face.

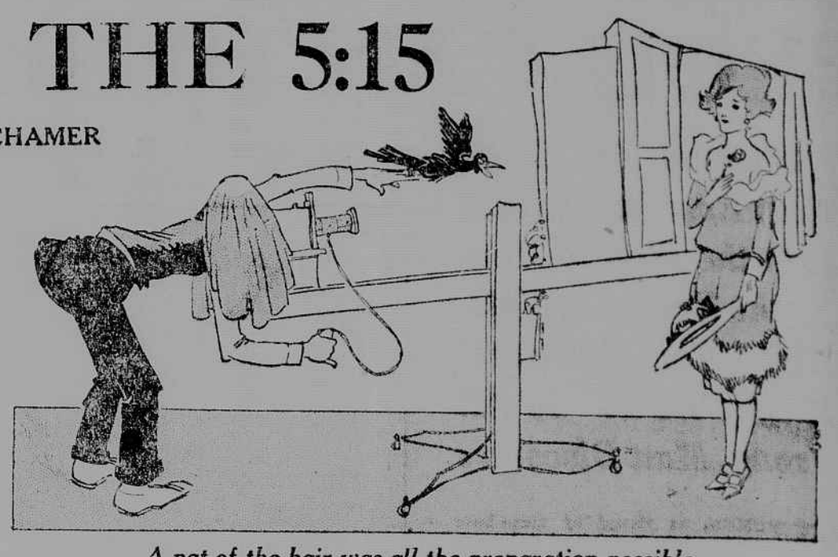
Thus it came about that a studio was set up in a nook in the Grand Central Station, and there one might obtain a camera portrait which, while it might not do one entire justice, yet was guaranteed to be a sufficiently close likeness to enable the conductor to vise one. The picture was pasted to one's ticket bookholder, there to do yeoman service as an identication for a year, after which the railroad intimates that a new holder and new photograph will be in order, perhaps on the theory that one alters sadly after a year of commuting.

One did but enter the studio and one was convinced that it was there for the crass purpose of efficiency and not for art. One came to be photographed and one left "mugged." A large, deadly looking camera was leveled directly at the subject and all hope was dismissed that one might be enfiladed and taken in profile, which so many commuters prefer because it shows only half a face. A nervous glance showed the subject that he was superimposed upon a background of cheese cloth, which is not too reassuring to one accustomed to a pretty drop representing the Forest of Fontainebleau, the Old Yale Fence, or at the very least Niagara Falls or the Boardwalk at Atlantic City.

The next move was made by the photographer, who forced the subject to abandon the attitude he had struck and advance nearer, the camera apparently being of a very short range and the photographer at the lanyard determined not to fire until he saw the whites of one's eyes. Utterly neglecting to take the customary cover, the photographer found the range and proceeded with the taking of the picture. That he take cover was unnecessary at the time and only became a wise precaution when the subject viewed the finished portrait.

The photographer blandly indicated a brass plate near the muzzle of the camera and urged "Look here!" The commuter looked and there read the name of the maker of the camera, a name he must now treasure in his memory for purposes of revenge. While absorbed in the perusal of that brief bit the features of the commuter were allowed to impinge on the sensitized plate.

The lot of the lady commuter was less fortuitous. She bustled in and found not a mirror in sight. Also, there were rude and hurried persons in the line behind. A pat of the hair was absolutely all the preparation possible, and noses previously unpowdered were immortalized in their unbleached condition, a state of affairs which might have led to the downfall of the whole photographic scheme had not the management been crafty enough to avoid color prints. Another grave neglect was seen in the fact that not so much as one yard of tulle was provided, in spite of the widely known feminine persuasion that a photograph taken without several fathoms of billows of tulle undulating around the neck and shoulders is no photograph at all.



A pat of the hair was all the preparation possible

Small wonder then that the booths in the lower level where the finished photographs were delivered the day following were the centers of indignant femininity demanding second and third resittings, and insisting that they never would go on record "as snapped," even in commuting annals. The only solace to the hearts of the harassed photographers must have been the fact that babies ride free.

Now the conductor who used to hurry by of a morning and evening with a perfunctory punch of one's ticket halts and bends on one a glance, both kindly and quizzical. He seems to be stifling a desire to say to the commuter, "Gosh, is that really you?" or "I'm so glad you have recovered from the serious illness from which you must have been suffering when this photo was taken." And the commuters with their shining morning faces make merry until the novelty of the thing wears off.

As a matter of fact, the photograph-commutation tickets are no novelty at all, but are as old as commuting itself, which may trace its lineage back to 1850, dim, distant days when the far reaches of White Plains and Paterson might be used as a base by the hardy worker in the great city. The doughty commuters of those days who thought nothing of a three or four hour jaunt each way were listed and billed through like freight. Their pictures were on their tickets, and until he got to know them the conductor would pass among the little group huddled down at one end of the car around the coal stove and carefully scrutinize their features under the flickering light of the sperm oil lamp.

An old time commutation ticket, excavated from files, shows that not only was a photograph demanded, but information as to height, age, form, complexion, hair and eyes. On that bit of research antiquarians base their theory that no women commuted in those days.

In comparison, the demand of the New York Central to-day is mild. If any criticism may be made, it is that the scheme has not been allowed to become enterprising enough. Why not extend it to the family trip ticket? Think of the wonderful group photos that would result. And why would it not be possible to print the photo-commuting ticket on one side of a postal card, so that at the end of a month of use it might be mailed to some friend as a souvenir, with some such appropriate sentiment as "Greetings from New Hamburg"?

And why, after all, just a picture? Why not a moving picture? That ought to be the best way to take a commuter.

PRODIGAL DAUGHTERS

By GRACIA POPE WOOD

THE prodigal son sat down, you remember, and meditated on the comforts of home. He didn't like his board and room and he was tired of the grunting herd it was his duty to feed. He decided he didn't want a career, after all, and that perhaps it wouldn't be such a bad thing to go back home and take a place in his father's store. Moreover, he had seen a good deal of the world, and it wasn't as thrilling as the travel articles had led him to believe. So he got up, brushed off his rather seedy looking clothes and said: "I'll give the old man a chance, anyhow."

The outcome was better than he had dared hope. His father was a good sport about it all, and instead of saying "Back, I see! And what do you want here?" he came to meet him and stopped on the way home and said, "Pick out a suit and a new scarfpin, and hurry up, for mother will be waiting dinner." That was the most festive meal he had seen in many a long day.

But to-day it is the prodigal daughter who is sitting down and having some of the same thoughts that came into the mind of that well known son so many centuries ago. And it is her story that should be told.

You all know her kind, if you aren't one yourself. Most of these prodigals in New York live in little apartments, three rooms on the fifth floor, with another of their kind. Such rooms are equipped with gayly draped couches, many pillows, tables that can be stretched out at meal time, brass candlesticks holding candles that match the draperies, a parchment shaded lamp, some colorful pictures and a tea set of blue or rose or yellow, an electric iron, a substantial ironing board and several ash trays, a typewriter, easel or piano.

Here she lives happily, if she has a moderately good job or is learning to write or paint or sing or play. But many a one has no good job this summer and many another one is getting wabbly knees about her art and wondering if she can do it after all. And it is about such we are telling this story.

This is the way it happened in most cases. After she was graduated from boarding school or college or both everybody said:

"How nice it will be for Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So to have Mabel with them again! Those two people alone in that great big house! It can't help but be lonesome! Mabel will bring new life to it, and after they have done so much for her she will be so glad to be a comfort to them."

Yes, yes! So Mabel came home per everybody's schedule. She went to bridge parties and meetings with her ambitious, well tailored mother and drove down to the office every evening after her kindly, white-haired father and played golf many mornings with other "society girls and young matrons," as the local papers spoke of them, and had occasional mildly interesting dates. She served the community, likewise, by coaching the high school play and serving on various committees and helping in every drive, until at length one morning she woke up and announced to herself that she couldn't stand it any longer. She was fed up. It was a purposeless, stupid existence she led, regulated and managed by everybody except herself. She was fast becoming an old maid, and some day would either find herself smug and satisfied or wickedly unhappy and bitter. So she announced to her unsuspecting parents that she was going to sell the little house whose rent had been hers since high school days and take the money it would bring and strike out for New York. She wouldn't sell the bonds her father had given her when she was twenty-one, but she would arrange to borrow money on them if worst came to worst. Her mother wept and called her heartless and her father asked if she would like a new roadster of her own.

"You don't understand," she said. And they didn't. Her father threatened, advised, pleaded. It only delayed things a little bit.

She arrived one day and soon after began a search for a small, inexpensive apartment. The first requirement was easily met, the second finally ignored. Then she devoted herself to second-hand stores, small shops and paint until the place bloomed in just such harmonies of color as she had dreamed of but never dared perpetrate on her father's respectable, wide-awninged house.

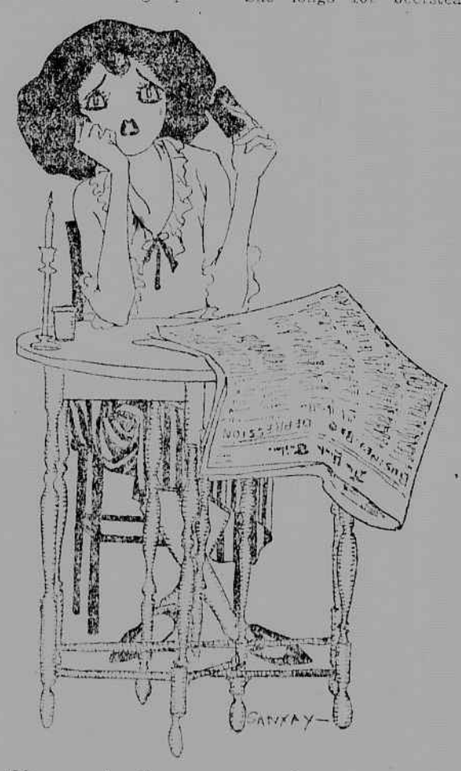
Next she found herself a job or began to study the art toward which she leaned. She felt a new and thrilling independence. As an example of it she learned to smoke cigarettes. Not that she liked them especially, but because they were so forbidden in Galesburg or Davenport or Topeka. Her parents would have been as willing for her to throw bricks at the minister as he passed on his way to visit the sick as for the neighbors to see her light a vile cigarette. She rioted in shows and concerts and art exhibits and made new and fascinating friends. She ate in funny little tea rooms and gardens and at any and all hours. She rode on the buses and she discovered Chinatown and Washington Square.

To-day this prodigal daughter studies her bank account and hopes that people are right who say things will pick up this fall. She writes her parents out West or down South, or where you will, the same gay, impersonal letters, and they still refuse to believe she is serious about a life and career of her own.

She looks at the windows full of new fall hats with yearning in her heart, and wonders if one will ever be hers. The meals on the gate-legged table are becoming less and less festive. One by one luxuries are dispensed with as the cleaning woman. She has made out a budget which she follows carefully. It seems to her so humiliating and petty to have to consider even a nickel. And she is really thrilled when she has an invitation to dinner. At home food had seemed to her to come as naturally and simply as air or water. She longs for beefsteak, and remembers that they have it two or three times a week at home, and she almost weeps at the thought of Jenny's cakes.

It was at about this point that the prodigal son said goodby to his unsatisfactory job, and people have been praising him ever since. And yet if he had tried a little longer and a little harder he might have made good by himself. Is the daughter, too, going to arise and go to her father?

She reads the paper to see if it prophesies better conditions soon and she eschews the luxuries of life. She eats peanut butter and chocolate for dinner—nourishing and inexpensive. But she dreams many times of the gold ring and the fatted calf!



She reads the paper and eats peanut butter and chocolate for dinner

A CHANGE OF HEART

By JEAN BERTHEROY

Translated by William L. McPherson

"DON'T you recognize me? Don't you recognize me?"

"Not at all," she answered.

And since they were not in a salon, but in the big hall of a casino, which anybody could enter by paying a fee, she spoke rather resentfully.

He told her his name:

"Jacques Martègne."

She gave a little "Oh!" of surprise and quickly extended her hand.

"Are you alone?" he asked.

"All alone."

He looked at her attentively. Had the war made her a widow, like so many others? Nevertheless, nothing in her dress or in her face indicated a recent bereavement. On the contrary, he found her more beautiful, more charming, more elegant than ever before. Not daring to question her further, he spoke of himself.

"Have I changed so much that you didn't recognize me? I have let my beard grow, it is true. And a long stay in the Orient has told on me. Five years out there count double in a man's life."

"Yes," she said, "five years out there and three since—that makes it eight years since we have seen each other."

She smiled calmly. Yet she had passionately loved this man. Before marrying the soldier who had fallen she had dreamed of marrying Jacques Martègne. But he hadn't seemed to share her sentiments. Perhaps he had never suspected them. To-day he appeared to be more upset than she was by this unexpected meeting. He gave her a curiously eager look.

A silence fell between them—one of those silences in which souls meet and often discover more than they could with the aid of words. Then Yvonne Raveaux resumed:

"Are you surprised to find me in a place like this after my widowhood? But I wasn't made for solitude. After spending many months in retirement, I decided to seek distraction. I came here to pass the winter, to enjoy the sunshine, the blue sea, the spectacle of men and women who know how to throw off the burdens of life."

"I am almost in the same state of mind as you," he answered. "Not that I am in mourning—except for my lost illusions. I have seen so much suffering and grief around me! The cup is full. So I came, also, to this delightful spot with the idea of relieving and refreshing my spirit."

Now they understood each other. Without embarrassment they exchanged semi-confidences. Yvonne rediscovered in Jacques' handsome face characteristics which she had long forgotten—his eyes of a blue so deep that they sometimes seemed black; his straight Latin nose, his fine lips, half concealed by his beard, but revealed by a melancholy smile. These features, however, didn't inspire her with any other feeling than the innocent pleasure which one finds in contemplating a harmonious human face—the chef-d'œuvre of the created world.

She allowed her glance to meet Jacques' without coquetry, without any provocative intention. He was conscious that she recalled the past. She had, in fact, recognized him exactly as what he had been and as what he had never ceased to be. And since he was troubled more and more by the tranquil confidence which she exhibited he ventured to express, under the form of a banal compliment, the thought which dominated him:

"You have grown very beautiful. When you were a young girl you didn't seem to promise to bloom out so magnificently."

She knew well that she was more beautiful now and more desirable. The glances of other men had told her that. In spite of the trials she had passed through, nature, always vigilant, had continued its work, and had brought her to this point of perfection. She said indifferently:

"What shall I do with my beauty now? I have completely renounced the desire to please."

Was her sincerity beyond question? And why, then, did she wear that delicious hat, whose shadow emphasized the golden tint of her hair; and that charming gown, which accentuated her graceful figure? Jacques was piqued. Nothing could hold him back now. He dashed down the perilous slope.

"Ah! If you only would!" he suggested. "You are free. So am I. Perhaps happiness is near at hand for both of us."

She looked at him steadily and said, after a brief silence:

"Do you know that I was once deeply in love with you?"

The young man started. His expression changed.

"No, I didn't know it. I never had the ordinary masculine fatuity. If I had suspected it, Yvonne! Ah! Mon Dieu! But, you see, fate has brought us together again. I have come back to you."

"It is useless," she said placidly. "I don't love you any more?"

"Why so? Why? Could I have lost favor in your eyes? Or is it the memory of another?"

"I can't explain it to you. It isn't any of the things you mention. But my heart has changed. That love is completely dead in me. It is as cold as a corpse. I tell you truly, Jacques. I couldn't love you, now."

He turned livid.

"How could you be so cruel? Don't you understand how much I shall suffer and how unhappy I shall be?"

She turned a little pale, out of pity and human sympathy. But she remembered what she, too, had suffered in the days of her adolescence—what she, too, had suffered from that first wound of love, which time had healed.

"Each in his turn," she said in a low voice.

RUNNING THE RUM RAPID

(Continued from page one)

we have three separate offenses for each of which a $500 fine may be assessed. If we catch a man with a load of liquor, it is not so difficult to convict him on charges of having violated all three provisions of the enforcement act.

"But what is a fine of $500 to $1,500 to men who make that much every few days? If you were clearing from $25,000 to $50,000 yearly, would you mind dropping from $500 to $1,500 in a poker game once or twice a year? Hardly?"

However, it is only fair to state that the price paid by the whisky ring is generally higher than the fine and cost of litigation in case of conviction. The booze confiscated is a dead loss, so is the flivver or truck or touring car. The law governing transportation of vehicles across the line is an extremely awkward one for the smugglers. Any person driving a vehicle of any sort across the line must register his vehicle with the customs authorities. If he fails to do so and is caught, his vehicle is confiscated. A few weeks ago Federal officers chased and caught a New Yorker driving a high priced car. He was returning from Canada. The car contained no contraband and the officers suspected that the driver had deposited his load of liquor in the woods along the road. However, the car was seized. It had not been registered when it entered or left Canada. One of these days the owner will have an opportunity of buying back his car at public auction.

One of the great obstacles of the revenue officers, according to their own story, is the failure of the Canadian authorities to co-operate in the conviction of smugglers. In one instance, I was told, the conviction of a man charged with smuggling depended on the testimony of a policeman in a Province of Quebec city. The American authorities requested the policeman to testify, and the latter declared his willingness to do so, but was stopped by the Mayor of the Canadian town, who threatened to relieve the policeman of his job if he meddled in the matter.

"They are sore as the very devil across the border," said the American customs officer who told me this story, "because of the exchange rate. Real estate operations on this side of the line have fallen off at least 50 per cent because of the exchange.

"You mentioned visiting a little Canadian town near your camp and having a bottle of ale in a barroom over there. Did you see anything surreptitious about that saloon? Of course not. And yet that place is a blind pig. There are blind pigs operating openly in nearly every Canadian border town, and the Canadian authorities wink at the law violations. They know these places will attract Americans who will spend their money for ale and beer. There is very little booze sold in these border blind pigs. The Canadian authorities don't mind how much stuff is smuggled across the border, so long as it means that good American dollars are left in Canada. I can hardly blame them either for being sore over the exchange.

If there were any inclination for co-operation with the American Federal authorities across the border the Canadians could make the storing of huge quantities of liquor in the border towns difficult, and smuggling in great quantities could be stopped. But there is no such co-operation.

An Orleans County judge, whose law firm in Newport has defended a good many smugglers, declares there is far more drunkenness in that quiet New England city than before prohibition, and with booze flowing so plentifully across the line any community within a few miles of the border can get all the hooch it wants. I know I could have had all the liquid refreshments I could buy through the accommodation of various affable gentlemen who were not engaged in smuggling, but knew "where you could get all the booze you want." But my own personal case was a bit different. I was an exception. I was probably the only resident of the United States who could buy and consume all the booze I could hold without even scratching the Eighteenth Amendment or the Volstead act. My cottage straddles the boundary line. Three-fourths of it is in the United States and one-fourth in Canada.

The kitchen is in the United States, strictly prohibition territory; the icebox is in Canada—to be exact, for we like to be exact in such matters, two feet and seven inches north of the line. I always sat at the north end of the dining room table, where I could sip a bottle of Black Horse ale with every meal. The lady across the table was in the United States, juggling a glass of Adam's ale. It seemed an ideal arrangement. I don't believe allowing women to drink anything stronger than tea or coffee. The Eighteenth Amendment is a blessing for at least one-half—the better half—of our population.

Our cottage is perched on a rocky ledge, right over the waters of Lake Memphremagog, commanding a wonderful view of that picturesque body of water, with its charming little islands and the ridge of hills and mountains west of the lake. That view across the lake is always lovely, and on clear, cool mornings it is arresting. You can sit still for hours gazing at the cameo clear picture—the low hills rising toward the north with their patterns of open green fields and pastures, hedged by the deeper green of the forest. It would be hard to imagine a more peaceful landscape, but winding in and out of the woods along the cheeks of these green mountains you spy a toy train puffing along, and you are reminded that aboard this international conveyance are, in all probability, two or more prosperous gentlemen—wholesale buyers of hooch—former Broadway saloon bouncers, ex-thugs, probably ex-convicts, engaged at present in defying the law.

They are our international comedians!